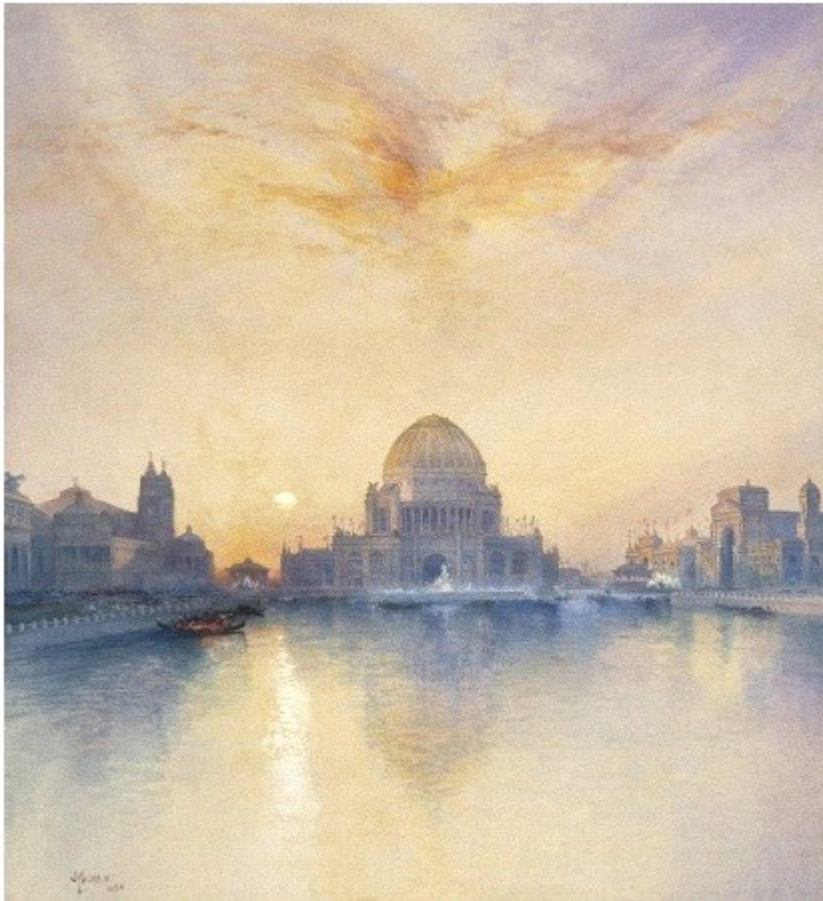


INTERNATIONAL POETRY - APRIL 2024



View of Venice, Brooklyn Museum of Art

LES AMANTS DE VENISE

from The Project Gutenberg EBook of
Vocabulaire, Poèmes, by Jean Cocteau

Fête galante

Un Londrès retrouve la bague
Sous les arbres. Pianos d'ombre.

Si se détache votre cendre
Mon avenir se divulgue.

Ô Musset! Ô Georges Sand!
Ô Venise! vieille guitare
Pleine de musique et d'eau,

Un simple tremblement de terre
Brouillera tes dominos.

THE POET AND THE BIRD.

by Elizabeth Barrett Browning
from Project Gutenberg's
The Land of Song, Book III,
Edited by Katherine H. Shute

Said a people to a poet--"Go out from among us
straightway!
While we are thinking earthly things, thou singest of
divine.
There's a little fair brown nightingale, who, sitting in the
gateway,
Makes fitter music to our ear, than any song of thine!"

The poet went out weeping--the nightingale ceased
chanting,
"Now, wherefore, O thou nightingale, is all thy sweetness
done?"--
--"I cannot sing my earthly things, the heavenly poet
wanting,
Whose highest harmony includes the lowest under the sun."

The poet went out weeping,--and died abroad, bereft
there.
The bird flew to his grave and died amid a thousand
wails.
And, when I last came by the place, I swear the music left
there
Was only of the poet's song, and not the nightingale's.

IN THE VALLEY OF CAUTERETZ.

from The Project Gutenberg EBook of
Enoch Arden, &c., by Alfred Tennyson

All along the valley, stream that flashest white,
Deepening thy voice with the deepening of the night,
All along the valley, where thy waters flow,
I walk'd with one I loved two and thirty years ago.
All along the valley while I walk'd to-day,
The two and thirty years were a mist that rolls away;
For all along the valley, down thy rocky bed
Thy living voice to me was as the voice of the dead,
And all along the valley, by rock and cave and tree,
The voice of the dead was a living voice to me.

VARIATIONS ON THE CARNIVAL OF VENICE

from Project Gutenberg's
Enamels and Cameos and other Poems,
by Théophile Gautier

I

ON THE STREET

There is a popular old air
That every fiddler loves to scrape.
'T is wrung from organs everywhere,
To barking dog with wrath agape.

The music-box has registered
Its phrases garbled and reviled.
'T is classic to the household bird;
Grandmother learned it as a child.

The trumpet and the clarinet,
In dusty gardens of the dance,
Blow it to clerk and gay grisette,
In shrill, unlovely resonance.

And of a Sunday swarm the folk
Under the honeysuckle vine,
Quaffing, the while they talk and smoke,
The sun, the melody, the wine.

It lurks within the wry bassoon
The blind man plays, the porch beneath.
His poodle whimpers low the tune,
And holds the cup between its teeth.

The players of the light guitar,
Decked with their flimsy tartans, pale,
With voices sad, where feasters are,
Through coffee-houses fling its wail.

Great Paganini at a sign,
One night, as with a needle's gleam,
Picked up with end of bow divine
The little antiquated theme,

And, threading it with fingers deft,
He broidered it with colours bright,
Till up and down the faded weft

Ran golden arabesques of light.

II

ON THE LAGOONS

Tra la, tra la, la, la, la,--who
Knows not the theme's soft spell?
Or sad or light or mock or true,
Our mothers loved it well.

The Carnival of Venice! Long
Adown canals it came,
Till, wafted on a zephyr's song,
The ballet kept its fame.

I seem, whene'er its phrase I hear,
A gondola to view,
With prow voluted, black and clear,
Slip o'er the water blue;

To see, her bosom covered o'er
With pearls, her body suave,
The Adriatic Venus soar
On sound's chromatic wave.

The domes that on the water dwell
Pursue the melody
In clear-drawn cadences, and swell
Like breasts of love that sigh.

My chains around a pillar cast,
I land before a fair
And rosy-pale facade at last,
Upon a marble stair.

Oh! all dear Venice with her towers,
Her boats, her masquers boon,
Her sweet chagrins, her mad, gay hours,
Throbs in that ancient tune.

The tenuous, vibrant chords that smite,
Rebuild in subtle way
The city joyous, free and light
Of Canaletto's day!

III

CARNIVAL

Venice robes her for the ball;
Decked with spangles bright,
Multi-coloured Carnival
Teems with laughter light.

Harlequin with negro mask,
Tights of serpent hue,
Beateth with a note fantasque
His Cassander true.

Flapping loose his long, white sleeve,
Like a penguin spread,
Through a subtle semibreve
Pierrot thrusts his head.

Sleek Bologna's doctor goes
Maundering on a bass.
Punchinello finds for nose
Quaver on his face.

Hurtling Trivellino fine,
On a trill intent,
Scaramouch to Columbine
Gives the fan she lent.

Gliding to the tune, I mark
One veiled figure rise,
While through satin lashes dark
Luring gleam her eyes.

Tender little edge of lace,
Heaving with her breath!
"Under is her own dear face!"
An arpeggio saith.

And beneath the mask I know
Bloom of rosy lips,
And the patch on chin of snow,
As she by me trips!

IV

MOONLIGHT

Amid the chatter gay and mad
Saint Mark to Lido wafts, a tune
Like as a rocket riseth glad
As fountain riseth to the moon.

But in that air with laughter stirred,

That shakes its bells far out to sea,
Regret, a little stifled bird,
Mingles its frail sob audibly.

And in a mist of memory clad,
Like dream well-nigh effaced, I view
The sweet Beloved, fair and sad,
Of dear, long-vanished days I knew.

Ah, pale she is! My soul in tears
An April day remembers yet:--
We sought the violets by the meres,
And in the grass our fingers met. . .

The vibrant note of violin
Is the child voice that struck my heart,
Exquisite, plaintive, argentine,
With all the anguish of its dart.

So sweetly, falsely, doth it steal,
So cruel, yet so tender, too,
So cold, so burning, that I feel
A deadly pleasure pierce me through;

Until my heart, an archway deep
Whose waters feed the fountain's lip,
Lest tears of blood in silence weep
Into my bosom drip by drip.

O Carnival of Venice!--theme
So chilling sad, yet ever warm!
Where laughter toucheth tears supreme,--
How hast thou hurt me with thy charm!

THE HOUSE THAT WAS

by Laurence Binyon
from The Project Gutenberg EBook of
Modern British Poetry, 1920 by Various

Of the old house, only a few crumbled
Courses of brick, smothered in nettle and dock,
Or a squared stone, lying mossy where it tumbled!
Sprawling bramble and saucy thistle mock
What once was firelit floor and private charm
Where, seen in a windowed picture, hills were fading
At dusk, and all was memory-coloured and warm,
And voices talked, secure from the wind's invading.

Of the old garden, only a stray shining
Of daffodil flames amid April's cuckoo-flowers,
Or a cluster of aconite mixt with weeds entwining!
But, dark and lofty, a royal cedar towers
By homely thorns: whether the white rain drifts
Or sun scorches, he holds the downs in ken,
The western vale; his branchy tiers he lifts,
Older than many a generation of men.

THERE WILL BE STARS

from The Project Gutenberg eBook of
Dark of the Moon, by Sara Teasdale

There will be stars over the place forever;
Though the house we loved and the street we loved are lost,
Every time the earth circles her orbit
On the night the autumn equinox is crossed,
Two stars we knew, poised on the peak of midnight
Will reach their zenith; stillness will be deep;
There will be stars over the place forever,
There will be stars forever, while we sleep.

HOMeward

from The Project Gutenberg EBook of
Japanese Literature, by Various

From Kaminábi's crest
The clouds descending pour in sheeted rain,
And, 'midst the gloom, the wind sighs o'er the plain:--
Oh! he that sadly press'd,
Leaving my loving side, alone to roam
Magami's des'late moor, has he reached home?

Anon.

IV. SUNSET. - SECOND CYCLUS.

Project Gutenberg's
Poems and Ballads of
Heinrich Heine

The beautiful sun
Has quietly descended into the sea.
The surging water is already tinted

By dusky night--
But still the red of evening
Sprinkles it with golden lights.
And the rushing might of the tide
Presses toward the shore the white waves,
That merrily and nimbly leap
Like woolly flocks of sheep,
Which at evening the singing shepherd boy
Drives homeward.

"How beautiful is the sun!"
Thus spake after a long silence, the friend
Who wandered with me on the beach.
And, half in jest, half in sober sadness,
He assured me that the sun
Was a beautiful woman, who had for policy
Espoused the old god of the sea.
All day she wanders joyously
In the lofty heavens, decked with purple,
And sparkling with diamonds;
Universally beloved, universally admired
By all creatures of the globe,
And cheering all creatures of the globe
With the radiance and warmth of her glance.
But at evening, wretchedly constrained,
She returns once more
To the wet home, to the empty arms
Of her hoary spouse.

"Believe me," added my friend,
And laughed and sighed, and laughed again,
"They live down there in the daintiest wedlock;
Either they sleep or else they quarrel,
Until high upheaves the sea above them,
And the sailor amidst the roaring of the waves can hear
How the old fellow berates his wife:
'Round strumpet of the universe!
Sunbeam coquette!
The whole day you shine for others,
And at night for me you are frosty and tired.'
After such curtain lectures,--
Quite naturally--bursts into tears
The proud sun, and bemoans her misery,
And bemoans so lamentably long, that the sea god
Suddenly springs desperately out of his bed,
And quickly swims up to the surface of the ocean,
To collect his wits and to breathe."

Thus did I myself see him yester-night,
Uprise from the bosom of the sea.

He had a jacket of yellow flannel,
And a lily-white night cap,
And a withered countenance.

**SUNG TO THE TUNE OF
"THE UNRIPE HAWTHORN BERRY"**

BY Niu Hsi-Chi

from the Project Gutenberg EBook of

Fir-Flower Tablets, by Various

Translator: Florence Ayscough

Mist is trying to hide the Spring-coloured hills,
The sky is pale, the stars are scattered and few.
The moon is broken and fading, yet there is light on your face,
These are the tears of separation, for now it is bright dawn.

We have said many words,
But our passion is not assuaged.
Turn your head, I have still something to say:
Remember my skirt of green open-work silk,
The sweet-scented grasses everywhere will prevent your forgetting.

ERA D'APRILE.

The Project Gutenberg EBook of

Lirica, by Annie Vivanti

Era d'Aprile e si faceva sera,
Ma il del portava ancor la chiara veste
Di vivo arancio e pallido celeste,
Su cui passava rapida una schiera
Di brune rondinelle.

Chiamandosi tra loro mestamente
Le tortorelle si facean sentire;
La glicine che stava per fiorire
L'olezzo univa al balsamo languente
Di narcisi e viole.

L'un presso all'altro correvamo in traccia
D'anemoni e di rose pallidette.
Ci tenevam le mani strette strette,
Non osavamo più guardarci in faccia,
Non osavam parlare.

D'un tratto egli s'arresta, al cor mi serra
Col viso smorto e le pupille accese....
Non saprei dire i baci che mi prese!
Ma tutti i fiori son caduti in terra,
Nè li abbiamo raccolti.

XVIII

The Project Gutenberg EBook of
Fruit-Gathering, by Rabindranath Tagore

No: it is not yours to open buds into blossoms.

Shake the bud, strike it; it is beyond your power to make it blossom.

Your touch soils it, you tear its petals to pieces and strew them in
the dust.

But no colours appear, and no perfume.

Ah! it is not for you to open the bud into a blossom.

He who can open the bud does it so simply.

He gives it a glance, and the life-sap stirs through its veins.

At his breath the flower spreads its wings and flutters in the wind.

Colours flush out like heart-longings, the perfume betrays a sweet
secret.

He who can open the bud does it so simply.

A PASSER-BY

by Robert Bridges
from The Project Gutenberg eBook of
The Oxford Book of English Verse; 1250-1900,
edited by Arthur Thomas Quiller-Couch

Whither, O splendid ship, thy white sails crowding,
Leaning across the bosom of the urgent West,
That fearest nor sea rising, nor sky clouding,
Whither away, fair rover, and what thy quest?
Ah! soon, when Winter has all our vales opprest,
When skies are cold and misty, and hail is hurling,
Wilt thou glide on the blue Pacific, or rest

In a summer haven asleep, thy white sails furling.

I there before thee, in the country that well thou knowest,
Already arrived am inhaling the odorous air:
I watch thee enter unerringly where thou goest,
And anchor queen of the strange shipping there,
Thy sails for awnings spread, thy masts bare:
Nor is aught from the foaming reef to the snow-capp'd grandest
Peak, that is over the feathery palms, more fair
Than thou, so upright, so stately and still thou standest.

And yet, O splendid ship, unhail'd and nameless,
I know not if, aiming a fancy, I rightly divine
That thou hast a purpose joyful, a courage blameless,
Thy port assured in a happier land than mine.
But for all I have given thee, beauty enough is thine,
As thou, aslant with trim tackle and shrouding,
From the proud nostril curve of a prow's line
In the offing scatterest foam, thy white sails crowding.

MY COUNTRY

from Project Gutenberg's
The Witch-Maid and other verses,
by Dorothea Mackellar

The love of field and coppice,
Of green and shaded lanes,
Of ordered woods and gardens
Is running in your veins;
Strong love of grey-blue distance,
Brown streams and soft, dim skies--
I know but cannot share it,
My love is otherwise.

I love a sunburnt country,
A land of sweeping plains,
Of ragged mountain ranges,
Of droughts and flooding rains;
I love her far horizons,
I love her jewel-sea,
Her beauty and her terror--
The wide brown land for me!

The tragic ring-barked forests
Stark white beneath the moon,
The sapphire-misted mountains,

The hot gold hush of noon.
Green tangle of the brushes
Where lithe lianas coil,
And orchids deck the tree tops
And ferns the crimson soil.

Core of my heart, my country!
Her pitiless blue sky,
When sick at heart, around us
We see the cattle die--
But then the grey clouds gather
And we can bless again
The drumming of an army,
The steady, soaking rain.

Core of my heart, my country!
Land of the Rainbow Gold,
For flood and fire and famine
She pays us back threefold
Over the thirsty paddocks,
Watch, after many days,
The filmy veil of greenness
That thickens as we gaze.

An opal-hearted country,
A wilful, lavish land--
All you who have not loved her,
You will not understand--
Though earth holds many splendours,
Wherever I may die,
I know to what brown country
My homing thoughts will fly.

AUSTRALIA.

SPRING WITH THE TEACHER

by Eva A. Jessye

from Project Gutenberg's

Negro Poets and Their Poems,

Edited by Robert T. Kerlin

'Tis now the time of silver moon,
Of swelling bud and fancies free
As western winds, but then, ah me!
May cannot come too soon;
The rover calls in every child,
And sets his pulses running wild!

"Do stop that noise and take your seat!
Joe, learn to study quietly!
Why girl, it surely has me beat
How you forget geography!
Brazil's in Spain? Here, close that book!
What caused the Civil War, you say?--
Suzanna says somebody took
Her beads; return them right away!

"Now boy, I told you once before
To put that story book away!
I'll call the roll: Beatrice Moore,
Why were you absent yesterday?
Why yes, I heard that mocking bird.
Lee Arthur, straighten up your face!
Well, surely, class, you never heard
Of adverbs having tense and case!

"Now, James, explain the term 'per cent,'
My, my, 'tis surely not forgot!
If it were fun or devilment
You'd know it all, sir, like as not!
Who put that bent pin in my chair?
No one of course--bent pins can walk!
I'll tell you though, had I sat there
I'd make these straps and switches talk.

"A picnic on for Saturday?
(I wish that I were going, too!)
Oh, no! I couldn't get away,
I have so many things to do.
Well, there's the bell! Goodbye, goodbye,
And be good children, don't forget."--
Well, thank the Lord they're gone, but I
Can hear their joyous laughter yet.

'Tis now the time of silver moon,
Of swelling bud and fancies free
As western winds, but then, ah me!
May cannot come too soon!

"O MERRY MAY THE MAID BE"

by John Clerk [1684-1755]

from Project Gutenberg's etext of

V2 The Home Book of Verse,

Edited by Burton Stevenson

O merry may the maid be
That marries wi' the miller,
For, foul day and fair day,
He's aye bringing till her, -
Has aye a penny in his purse
For dinner or for supper;
And, gin she please, a good fat cheese
And lumps of yellow butter.

When Jamie first did woo me,
I speired what was his calling;
"Fair maid," says he, "O come and see,
Ye're welcome to my dwelling."
Though I was shy, yet could I spy
The truth o' what he told me,
And that his house was warm and couth,
And room in it to hold me.

Behind the door a bag o' meal,
And in the kist was plenty
O' guid hard cakes his mither bakes,
And bannocks werena scanty.
A guid fat sow, a sleeky cow
Was standing in the byre,
Whilst lazy puss with mealy mouse
Was playing at the fire.

"Guid signs are these," my mither says,
And bids me tak' the miller;
For, fair day and foul day,
He's aye bringing till her;
For meal and maut she doesna want,
Nor anything that's dainty;
And now and then a kecking hen,
To lay her eggs in plenty.

In winter, when the wind and rain
Blaws o'er the house and byre,
He sits beside a clean hearth-stane,
Before a rousing fire.
With nut-brown ale he tells his tale,
Which rows him o'er fu' nappy: -
Wha'd be a king - a petty thing,
When a miller lives so happy?

A MORNING ON COMO

from Project Gutenberg's
'Twixt Earth and Stars,
by Marguerite Radclyffe-Hall

A symphony in pink and blue,
A rhapsody of sun and dew,
A virgin Venus born anew,
Lay Como in the morning.

And—"Would to Heaven some Muse divine
Could guide this erring pen of mine,"
I cried, "to paint such grace as thine,
Sweet Como in the morning!"

WORDS

from the Project Gutenberg EBook of
Poems,
by John Hay

When violets were springing
And sunshine filled the day,
And happy birds were singing
The praises of the May,
A word came to me, blighting
The beauty of the scene,
And in my heart was winter,
Though all the trees were green.

Now down the blast go sailing
The dead leaves, brown and sere;
The forests are bewailing
The dying of the year;
A word comes to me, lighting
With rapture all the air,
And in my heart is summer,
Though all the trees are bare.

XLII

From the Project Gutenberg EBook of
Sappho: One Hundred Lyrics,
Translated by Bliss Carman

O heart of insatiable longing,
What spell, what enchantment allures thee

Over the rim of the world
With the sails of the sea-going ships?

And when the rose-petals are scattered
At dead of still noon on the grass-plot,
What means this passionate grief,--
This infinite ache of regret?

A TIME TO TALK

from The Project Gutenberg EBook of
Selected Poems, by Robert Frost

When a friend calls to me from the road
And slows his horse to a meaning walk
I don't stand still and look around
On all the hills I haven't hoed,
And shout from where I am, What is it?
No, not as there is a time to talk.
I thrust my hoe in the mellow ground,
Blade-end up and five feet tall,
And plod: I go up to the stone wall
For a friendly visit.

POENTE

by CÔRTES-RODRIGUES
from The Project Gutenberg EBook of
Orpheu Nº1, by [Various]

As minhas sensações--barcos sem velas--
Erram de mim. Occaso rôxo. Scismo.
Meus olhos de Não-ver-me são janellas
Dando sobre o abysmo.

Abysmo d'Outro Ser. E a Hora chora
Nostalgica de Si, mas eu de vê-las
Erro de Ser-me, e a noite sem estrellas
Apavora.

Delirio rôxo d'agonia. Prece.
Poente feito noite. Escuridão.
Perturbo-me de mim em sensação
E dentro em mim desfallece
E anoitece
A sombra do meu Ser na solidão
Do dia que morreu

E se perdeu
E jámais amanhece.

A CONTENTED MAN

The Project Gutenberg EBook of
Dream Tales and Prose Poems,
by Ivan Turgenev

A young man goes skipping and bounding along a street in the capital. His movements are gay and alert; there is a sparkle in his eyes, a smirk on his lips, a pleasing flush on his beaming face.... He is all contentment and delight.

What has happened to him? Has he come in for a legacy? Has he been promoted? Is he hastening to meet his beloved? Or is it simply he has had a good breakfast, and the sense of health, the sense of well-fed prosperity, is at work in all his limbs? Surely they have not put on his neck thy lovely, eight-pointed cross, O Polish king, Stanislas?

No. He has hatched a scandal against a friend, has sedulously sown it abroad, has heard it, this same slander, from the lips of another friend, and--*has himself believed it!*

Oh, how contented! how kind indeed at this minute is this amiable, promising young man!

February 1878.

PRESENCES

From Project Gutenberg's
The Wild Swans at Coole,
by William Butler (W.B.) Yeats

This night has been so strange that it seemed
As if the hair stood up on my head.
From going-down of the sun I have dreamed
That women laughing, or timid or wild,
In rustle of lace or silken stuff,
Climbed up my creaking stair. They had read
All I had rhymed of that monstrous thing
Returned and yet unrequited love.
They stood in the door and stood between
My great wood lecturn and the fire
Till I could hear their hearts beating:
One is a harlot, and one a child
That never looked upon man with desire,

And one it may be a queen.

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